

Form 10-300
(Rev. 6-72)UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Maryland
COUNTY:	Allegany
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	

1. NAME	
COMMON:	The Narrows
AND/OR HISTORIC:	

2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: both sides of U. S. Route 40 from Eckhart Junction to Cumberland			
CITY OR TOWN: Near Cumberland		CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Sixth	
STATE Maryland	CODE 24	COUNTY: Allegany	CODE 001

3. CLASSIFICATION			
CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ _____			

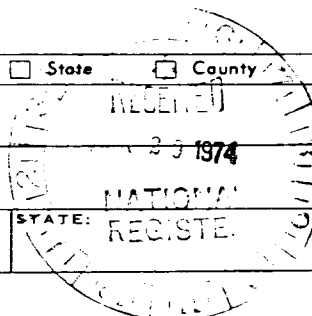
4. OWNER OF PROPERTY			
OWNER'S NAME: County Commissioners of Allegany County and Multiple Owners			
STREET AND NUMBER: Allegany County Courthouse, Prospect Square			
CITY OR TOWN: Cumberland	STATE: Maryland	CODE 24	

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION			
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Allegany County Courthouse			
STREET AND NUMBER: Prospect Square			
CITY OR TOWN: Cumberland	STATE: Maryland	CODE 24	

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS			
TITLE OF SURVEY:			
DATE OF SURVEY: <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local			
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Maryland	COUNTY: Allegany	FOR NPS USE ONLY	
		ENTRY NUMBER	DATE



7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

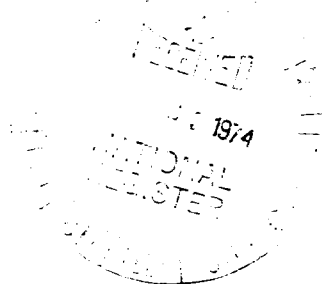
DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Narrows is a steep-walled gorge about one mile long, located one and one half miles northwest of Cumberland. It was created by the slow, downward cutting of Wills Creek through a narrow ridge known as Wills Mountain north of the gorge and Haystack Mountain south of it. The creek flows in a southeasterly direction through The Narrows, forming a reverse "S" curve.

The valley floor is fairly level and is about 650 feet above sea level. The elevation at the top of the gorge proper is about 1500 feet.

The walls of The Narrows are comprised of the red shales of the Juniata Formation, overlain by the hard, cliff-forming, white Tuscarora Sandstone. Although the rocks are about 400 million years old, the gorge itself can be no older than about 200 million years and is probably less than half that age.

Paralleling the stream on the north bank are the tracks of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. On the south bank are U. S. Highway 40 and, on a bench above the highway, the tracks of the Western Maryland Railway. The stone abutments of an 1833 bridge remain on either side of Wills Creek. At the east end of the gorge are the relatively new flood-control revertments of the Army Corps of Engineers, and also a number of commercial establishments that have been built adjacent to the highway.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

B. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- ☒ Pre-Columbian ☐ 16th Century ☐ 18th Century ☒ 20th Century
☐ 15th Century ☐ 17th Century ☒ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Narrows is a natural landmark whose importance is both scenic and historic. Two centuries of travelers have marveled at the dramatic cut through Wills and Haystack Mountains. Historically, this low-grade pass facilitated commerce, travel, and migration between Cumberland and the West.

Surprisingly, the early roads in the area by-passed this easy route. Nemacolin, the Delaware Indian who blazed the first trail through the wilderness for the Ohio Company in 1752, laid out his road over the steep mountain grades. In 1755, General Edward Braddock's army, on its way to its disastrous defeat at Fort Duquesne, hauled its cumbersome equipment over Nemacolin's trail. Searching for an easier route, one of Braddock's lieutenants, Charles Spendelow, re-discovered the pass that for a time bore his name. Nevertheless, the first route of the National Road also went over the mountain.

It was not until 1832, when the Federal Government conducted an extensive investigation of the National Road, that the highway was re-routed through The Narrows. The abutments of the old stone bridge across Wills Creek that was used from 1834 to 1932 can still be seen just downstream from the present highway bridge. The names of the builders were carved in marble blocks set into the abutments of a number of the National Road bridges in this area. One of these blocks gives the legend "Built by Thomas Fealy; Lt. JN° Pickell, U. S. Engineer; H. M. Pettit, Ass't. Supd't." The date was 1833.

For well over a century this lower-grade passage was the principal westward route from Cumberland; even today it is still U. S. Highway 40. However, advanced highway design coupled with the limited space on the floor of The Narrows directed the routing of the National Freeway over the mountain, more nearly coinciding with the old Indian path that supposedly followed a still earlier buffalo trace than with the historic National Road. The future significance of The Narrows rests with its continued use as a transportation corridor.

"Limited additional transportation improvements in the Narrows would be consistent with its historical significance!"

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bailey, Kenneth P. The Ohio Company of Virginia and the Westward Movement 1748-1792.... Glendale, California: Arthur H. Clark, 1939.
 . Thomas Cresap, Maryland Frontiersman. Boston: Christopher Publishing House, 1944.
 Sargent, Winthrop. The History of an Expedition Against Fort Du Quesne [sic] in 1735.... Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1856.
 Searight, Thomas B. The Old Pike, A History of the National Road.... Uniontown, Pennsylvania: the author, 1894. (see continuation sheet)

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
NW	Degrees Minutes Seconds 39 ° 40 ' 21 "	Degrees Minutes Seconds 78 ° 47 ' 26 "		Degrees Minutes Seconds ° ' "	Degrees Minutes Seconds ° ' "	
NE	39 ° 40 ' 21 "	78 ° 46 ' 43 "				
SE	39 ° 39 ' 36 "	78 ° 46 ' 42 "				
SW	39 ° 39 ' 36 "	78 ° 47 ' 27 "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 300 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	COOE	COUNTY	COOE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:		DATE	
Claire A. Richardson, Baltimore County Committee		May 1973	
ORGANIZATION			
Maryland Historical Trust			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
2525 Riva Road			
CITY OR TOWN:	STATE	COOE	
Annapolis	Maryland	24	

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☒ State ☐ Local ☐

Name

Orlando Ridout IV

Title

Maryland Historic State
Preservation Officer

Date

April 11, 1974

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date

ATTEST:

 Keeper of The National Register

Date

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Form 10-300a
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Maryland	
COUNTY	
Allegany	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

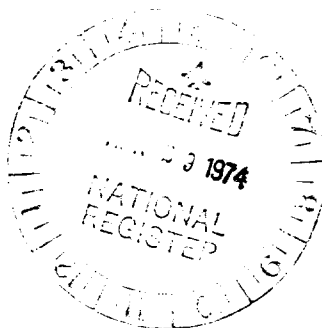
(Number all entries)

The Narrows

Number 9. Major Bibliographical References continued.

Schmidt, John C. "The Maryland Pass that Opened the West." The Sunday Sun Magazine. Baltimore, Maryland. December 18, 1960.

Thomas, James W. and T. J. C. Williams. History of Allegany County, Maryland.... 2 volumes. reprint. Baltimore: Regional Publishing, 1969.



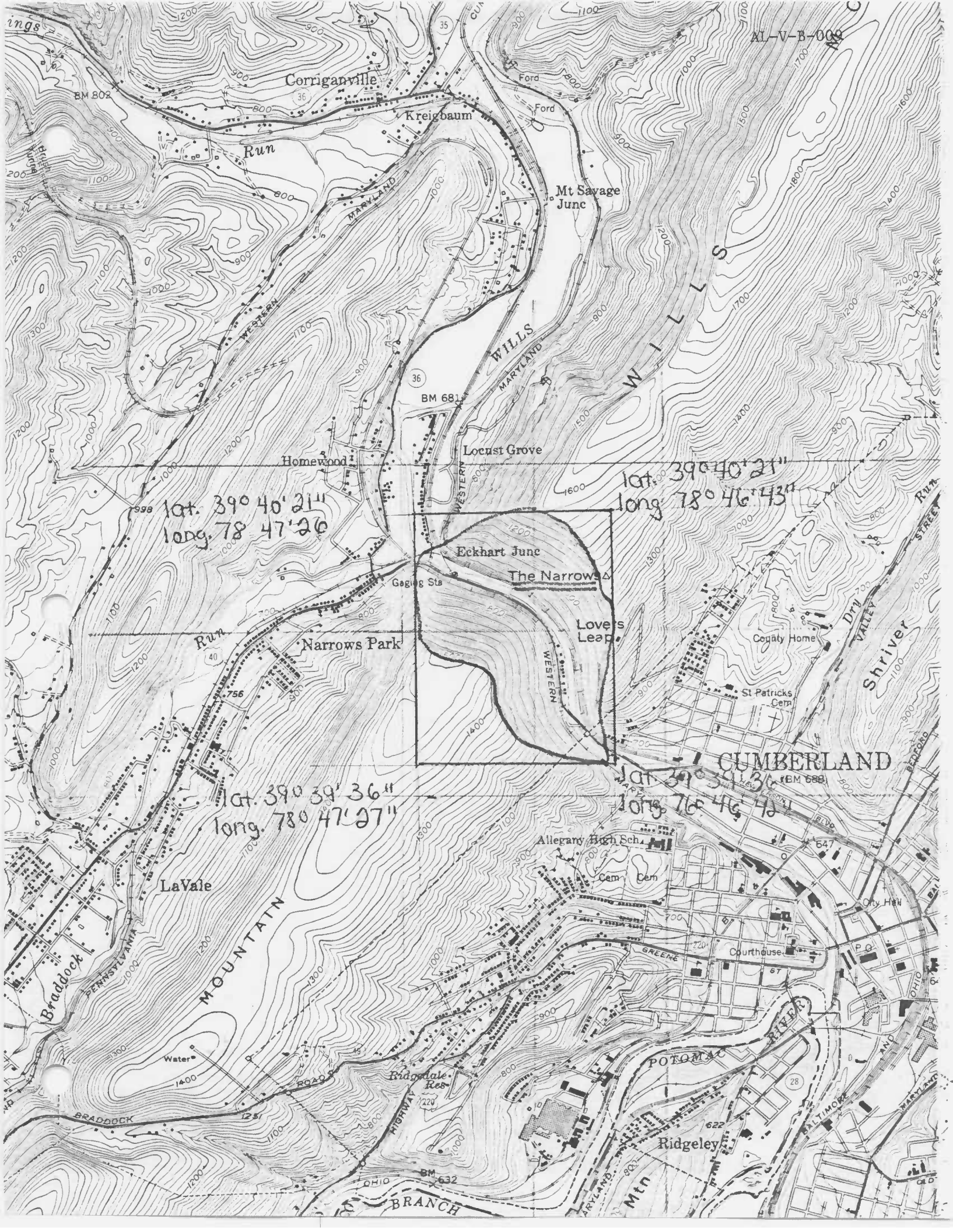


The Narrows is a natural landmark, a dramatic cut through Wills and Haystack mountains, whose importance is both scenic and historic. Historically, the pass has facilitated commerce, travel, and migration between Cumberland and the west. Early roads bypassed the Narrows. Nemacolin's path, an Indian trail, much of which later became Braddock Trail, used the steep mountain passes to the south. One of Braddock's officers, British Naval Lieutenant Charles Spendlowe, found the Narrows, and a large portion of Braddock's force used it, but the National Road first followed the steep mountain trail. Not until 1832, when the federal government extensively surveyed the

region, was the National Road rerouted through the Narrows. The abutments of the old stone bridge that carried the road over Wills Creek, a bridge used from 1834 to 1932, are still visible just downstream from the present U.S.-40 bridge. After more than a century's service as the main westward route, the Narrows is being bypassed again as U.S. 48 generally follows Nemacolin's Path west out of Cumberland.

Information courtesy of
Tri-County Council for
Western Maryland;
photograph, circa 1897, from
Art Work of Allegany County;
courtesy of Nadeane A. Gurley.

Schwartz, Lee, Al Feldstein and Joan Baldwin
1980 Allegany County, A Pictorial History. Virginia Beach/Norfolk:
Donning. P. 55.



AL-V-B-009

Corriganville

Kreigbaum

Mt Savage June

Run

MARYLAND

WILLS

BM 681

Locust Grove

Homewood

lat. 39° 40' 21"
long. 78° 47' 26"

lat. 39° 40' 21"
long. 78° 46' 43"

Eckhart June

The Narrows

Gaging Sta

Narrows Park

Loves Leap

Cogaly Home

St Patricks Cem

CUMBERLAND

lat. 39° 39' 36"
long. 78° 46' 43"

lat. 39° 39' 36"
long. 78° 47' 27"

LaVale

Allegany High Sch

Cem Cem

Courthouse

City Hall

POTOMAC RIVER

Ridgeley

BRADDOCK

Mtn

BALTIMORE

MARYLAND

BRADDOCK

PENNSYLVANIA

MOUNTAIN

Water

Ridgeley Res

BM 632

622

28

64

67

64

688

6

6

6

6

6

6

6

6

6



AL-52 the Narrows

AI-V-B-009

4/73 Michael Bourne



Cumberland Narrows

AL-V-009

PHOTO CREDIT, Please, . . . to

M.E. Warren

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